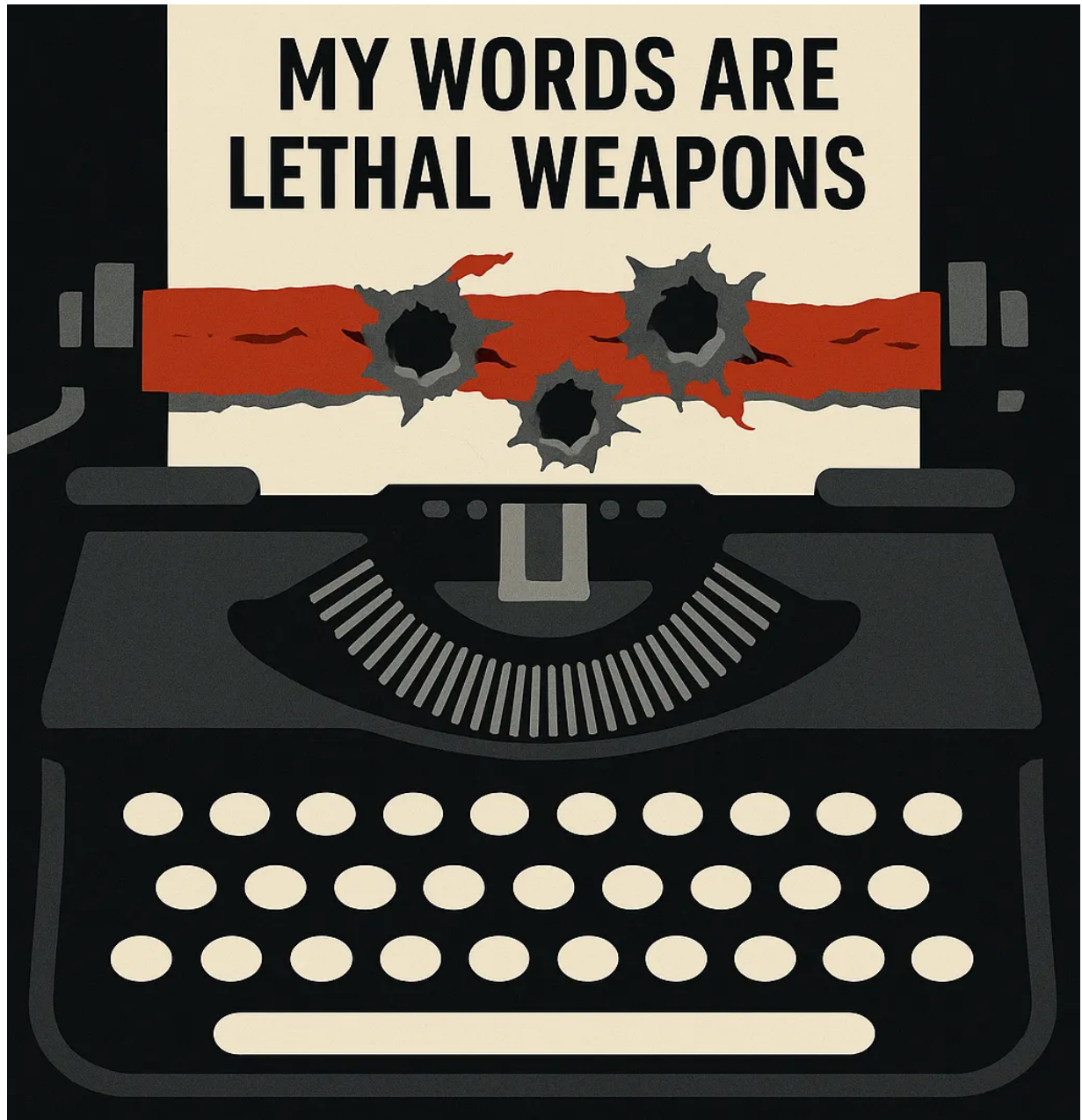


## Contents

[EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm an elite copywriter. Agora-trained. With a client roster...](#)

**EDITOR'S NOTE: I'm an elite copywriter. Agora-trained. With a client roster that includes Tony Robbins, Ramit Sethi, and Neil Patel. If you would like to work with me to help you craft a powerful message, you can book a consultation [here](#).**



Dear Permission to be Powerful Reader,

## **My words are lethal weapons.**

As a professional copywriter, I've persuaded millions with my words.

I've spent over a decade studying the finest intricacies of persuasion. I've learned from some of the best communicators of our age.

I've also read volumes about psychology and communication. All of that adds up to a pretty lethal skill set. Few people compare.

Now and then, I forget about all the energy I've put into being a great communicator.

And on a few rare occasions, I've deeply hurt people with the weight of my words. Some were traumatized, either intentionally or not, on my part.

I feel responsible for tempering some of the advice I've given you here in this book — to contextualize it further so you don't hurt people you love.

**I want to remind you that I filter the world into two categories — safe people and unsafe people.**

**I treat each category much differently.**

I don't want to treat safe people like they're unsafe. I'll lose people I care about very quickly if I do that.

But, in reality... I want unsafe people far away from me, so I don't care that much how they receive me. With that said, I tend to temper my response to an unsafe person to how egregious I think that person is being.

If I'm getting a threat of violence, for example, you will receive my full wrath, and I'm not going to feel sorry about it. If you are actively belittling

me... perhaps I'll tone it down, but I'll still be a little savage if the situation calls for it. Most of the time, it won't.

I grew up under very unusual circumstances that most people cannot relate to. So, you might find it difficult to accept why I am so steadfast about how I approach people. As I've said before, I paid a high price for these lessons. I purged a lot of people from my life.

## **Some were my flesh and blood.**

I must come across as a little jaded. Maybe so. Perhaps it's because, to this day, there are parts of my personality that still attract some toxic people to me.

Usually, when they arrive, I can spot them and get rid of them, but still, there's a sweet, sensitive side of me that attracts wolves predictably.

One of the significant insights I've had recently concerns attraction. When I feel attracted to someone, I don't take that as a sign that I should pursue them anymore. I first have to ask myself why.

Why am I attracted to that person? I may very well be attracted to that person because of their negative traits, not despite them.

I may like you BECAUSE you are avoidant, controlling, manipulative, and abusive. That's what I know. That's my default setting. That's what's familiar. So, I must be careful.

But, in either case, I only reserve my hyper-assertive treatment for situations where I'm being devalued. And, even then, I may not go all out on a person.

You may have noticed my brutally honest style and approach to my writing. This is something that developed over time. I believed in many lies growing up. I fell for ruses that complete idiots wouldn't have fallen for.

## **I kept the company of many pathological liars.**

After a while, I decided to go the opposite direction. I became a straight shooter.

I was a Radical Honesty buff then, and I've only grown more in that direction. It's very unsettling to some people. And it's very comforting to others. Either way, it is a potent tool.

Funny, I got bullied so much by so many people growing up that I became a bully's worse nightmare — able and willing to give the brutal honesty that could fuck a person up in the light of day.

I want to warn you to be cautious when following my advice. If people have been walking all over you for your whole life, it's unlikely that you're going to go for the nuclear option... but if you're not aware, you might hurt yourself or someone else.

Most people are afraid of the cold, hard truth. Some people can't handle the truth. Too much of it all at once can mess with a person's identity.

## **That said, be careful and discerning.**

If you have been paying attention, I've shown you the best skill sets for each end of the spectrum. I've also shown you how to use boundaries even in toxic situations. But I've also talked about how to be a great listener and empathizer. One skill set lends itself more to safe people, while the other will be more useful when dealing with unsafe people.

The post on listening will help you dramatically enhance the good vibes among your core group. And, 9 times out of 10, you won't have to use things like silence to assert yourself.

Understand that with the people I love and care about, there are lines that I would never cross, and I'm very clear about that. But, simultaneously, the world is filled with dangerous people. You won't always have the luxury of

avoiding them. And, if you don't know how to deal with them, they'll deal with you.

I also want to point something out lest you misinterpret what I'm teaching you here. In a previous section, I mentioned that silence — or disconnection — is my go-to boundary. In this case, you might think this is the same as the silent treatment. I don't think so. First, I'm asking you to be discerning and use your judgment.

## **Some people will not hear you, no matter how hard you try.**

They have their stuff they're trying to work through. It's usually not even about you. But, if they can't hear the words coming out of your mouth, your next alternative is to speak with your actions.

If that makes sense, it isn't about punishing people. And, if you do have to withdraw from someone like this, and you love them, it makes sense that you'll probably want to communicate why you pulled away after you did. That's what a healthy person would do. But you don't have to be so thorough with people who devalue you.

## **I have one pet peeve.**

# **That's being nice to people who are putting me down.**

## **Every people pleaser knows what this is like.**

Someone's belittling you, putting you down, taking advantage of you, crossing your boundary — whatever the case may be — and there you are, with a goofy grin on your face like everything's fine.

No. That kindness you're offering isn't mandatory.

When you show allegiance to someone who crosses you, that's abandoning yourself.

You don't have to play their game.

Staying in people-pleaser mode with someone devaluing you is fighting for the wrong team.

**It's a needless waste of your resources. So, wipe that grin off your face.**

Through this process, I discovered an approach to relationship conflict that I enjoy and stand by. It comes more naturally to me as a writer, so I suppose I'm biased. But when I'm having a conflict with someone I care about, I may have the whole thing over email.

**This isn't for everyone.**

But here's my case in favor of fighting over email. I was in a toxic relationship with a gaslighting partner who did not fight pretty at all.

So, I found that while she went out of her way to escalate conflicts, email was a great counterbalance.

Email takes the intensity of a conflict WAY down. It gives each person time to stop, think, and consider the impact of their words. And, they can never say they didn't say what they said because now, you have the receipts.

On the flip side, since I have all of these tools in my toolkit and have this overgrown sense of justice, sometimes, I think someone has gone too far — their behavior is too far out of pocket.

## **When that time comes, I've found myself teaching them a lesson they never forget.**

I love being that guy. Usually, this entails a degree of brutal honesty they're not used to — to say the least. Everyone lives with a certain degree of dishonesty. There are truths about themselves that they're not willing to see or admit. Often, those truths are evident to everyone around them, yet they refuse to see them.

## **Use this one carefully.**

I love David Goggins. I once heard him say, "I'd rather you hate me and get better than like me and stay the same."

This is what I'm getting at here. Sometimes, people need brutal honesty. But you must be very grounded and secure to be able to wield this particular weapon.

As I've mentioned before, there are lines that you don't want to cross with your loving relationships. One such line is respect. With people you love, who love you and are being loved by you, you don't have to go all out.

## **You can temper your honesty.**

**You don't have to say, "Dinner's gross." You could say, "It's well made, but I don't care for it."**

But I don't think every person deserves your respect. Furthermore, sometimes pandering to people who mistreat you only inflates them and enables their bad behavior.



Again, in this context, I'm talking about an unsafe person. Unfortunately for you, a dangerous person could be masquerading in your life as a person who should be safe. Your family members SHOULD be safe. But if that were always the case, you wouldn't read a book like this.

On the flip side, some people have, consciously or unconsciously, surrounded themselves with Yes men.

There may be a substantial unspoken rule they live by — I do what I want with impunity, and nobody can call me out.

But everyone else's behavior is subject to scrutiny. Some people are not in touch with reality.

Some people have made it their whole lives not hearing that their abusive behavior is wrong. That's WHY they're still treating the people around them like dirt!

In cases like that, I feel a particular responsibility to say something. And, sometimes, I get a lot of pleasure from doing it, too.

But, then, there's another situation...

I once had a friend who I loved very much.

I knew she was unhealthy, but I still loved her, so I kept her a healthy distance away so we wouldn't clash.

## **But one day, she crossed the line.**

I'm referring to someone who made it too far in life without feeling the consequences of her out-of-control behavior. When she crossed the line one day, I had to sit her down and tell her what I thought about her wild behavior. She couldn't handle it. We stopped being friends.

Sometimes, that happens. I miss her. But I thought about it, and I feel strongly that it was vital for her to hear the truth. We're not kids anymore.

She's a parent.

**Her out-of-control behavior had ramifications beyond just our friendship.**

Beyond that, what if you lived in integrity with what you honestly think and feel?

**Most people don't. Not really.**

The more aligned your thoughts and words become, the more powerful you become — internally and externally.

You don't necessarily need people to validate your knowledge, but a particular strength comes from being clear about what you think and feel and knowing what you know.

Knowing that your understanding is valid — enough to live by it. That's the right kind of growth in the right sort of direction.

Until next time,

A stylized, handwritten signature in black ink. The signature reads "Anton Volney" in a cursive script. The "A" is large and loops around the "nton". The "Volney" is written with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right. The signature is positioned diagonally across the lower half of the page.

Dancer, Writer, Buddhist.



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